



مجلة

جامعة الطائف

للعلوم الإنسانية

مجلة علمية محكمة

المجلد الرابع - العدد السابع عشر
محرم ١٤٤٠ هـ - أكتوبر ٢٠١٨ م



TU

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TAIF UNIVERSITY



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بل تمثل وجهة نظر الباحثين





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أمين التحرير

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شروط النشر

- أن يكون البحث المقدم أصيلاً، ومتسماً بالأصالة والابتكار، والمنهجية العلمية، وسلامة الاتجاه، وصحة اللغة، خالياً من المخالفات العقدية والفكرية.
- أن يلتزم الباحث بالأصول العلمية في العرض والتوثيق والاقتباس، والرسوم التوضيحية، والجداول والنماذج .
- أن يكون موضوع البحث ضمن مجالات المجلة وتخصصاتها.
- أن يقدم الباحث إقراراً بأن البحث لم يُنشر ولم يُقدم إلى جهات أخرى للنشر، ولن يُقدم إلى أي مجلة أخرى في حالة قبوله للنشر.
- أن لا يكون البحث مستلاً من رسالة علمية، أو كتاب، أو بحث سابق، أو متعدياً على ملكية علمية.
- تخضع البحوث بعد مراجعتها من قبل هيئة التحرير إلى التحكيم العلمي من متخصصين، ويطلع الباحث على خلاصة تقارير المحكمين ليصلح بحثه وفقها أو يبين رأيه فيما لا يؤخذ منها، وتحسم الهيئة الخلاف في ذلك.
- يتحمل الباحث مسئولية تصحيح بحثه وسلامته من الأخطاء الطباعية، والإملائية، والنحوية، وأخطاء الترقيم.
- عندما يقبل البحث للنشر تؤول حقوق النشر للمجلة، ولا يحق للباحث أن يطلب عدم نشره بعد إرساله للمحكمين.
- لا تلتزم المجلة رد البحوث التي لا تقبل للنشر.
- لا تقدم المجلة مكافآت مالية لما يُنشر فيها.
- الآراء في البحوث المقدمة للمجلة تعبر عن آراء أصحابها ولا تعبر بالضرورة عن رأي هيئة التحرير.

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- يتم تعبئة نموذج طلب النشر مع إقرار بأن البحث لم يسبق نشره (النموذج رقم (١) .
- يتم إخطار الباحث باستلام بحثه وإحالته لهيئة التحرير.
- لهيئة تحرير المجلة حق الفحص الأولي للبحث، وتقرير أهليته للتحكيم، أو رفضه.
- تخضع جميع البحوث، بعد إجازتها من هيئة التحرير، للتحكيم العلمي على نحو سري.
- في حال قبول البحث للنشر يتم إرسال خطاب يفيد بقبول البحث للنشر، وعند رفض نشر البحث يتم إرسال خطاب اعتذار عن قبول النشر.

- تعطى الأولوية في النشر لاعتبارات منها الأسبقية الزمنية، والضرورات التنسيقية للموضوعات.
- تُرتَّب البحوث عند النشر في أعداد المجلة وفق الاعتبارات الفنية، وليس لأي اعتبارات أخرى أي دور في هذا الترتيب.
- يتم تنسيق البحث حسب نمط المجلة المعتمد في ضوابط النشر من قبل الباحث.
- المكونات الرئيسة للبحوث العلمية المقبولة للنشر:
- لا تعتمد مجلة الجامعة نمطاً واحداً في منهجية البحث العلمي، نظراً للتنوع في طبيعة البحوث الانسانية من الكمي إلى النوعي، ومن التجريبي الميداني إلى الوصفي، إلا أن العناصر الرئيسة المشتركة بينها تتمثل في:
 - عنوان البحث، واسم الباحث/ين، والمسمى الوظيفي باللغتين العربية والأجنبية.
 - لا يرد اسم الباحث، أو الباحثين، في متن البحث أو هوامشه أو قائمة مراجعه، صراحة، أو بأي إشارة تكشف عن هويته، أو هوياتهم، وتستخدم بدلاً من ذلك كلمة "الباحث" أو "الباحثين".
 - ملخص الدراسة (باللغتين العربية والأجنبية) بحيث يجب أن يحتوي على الهدف العام للدراسة بالإضافة إلى العينة والأدوات المستخدمة، وأبرز النتائج التي توصل إليها، وأهم التوصيات بما لا يزيد عن عشرة أسطر.
 - المقدمة أو خلفية الدراسة.
 - مشكلة الدراسة وتحديد عناصرها وأسئلتها.
 - أهمية الدراسة وأهدافها.
 - الدراسات السابقة التي تفيد موضوع الدراسة وتساعد الباحث في مناقشة نتائجه، ويلتزم الباحث بعرض الدراسات السابقة بحسب التسلسل الزمني من الأقدم للأحدث، أو العكس كل منها في فقرة واحدة توضح الهدف الرئيس لها وعينتها وأدواتها وأهم نتائجها.
 - توضيح منهجية الدراسة المناسبة لطبيعة المشكلة البحثية وتتضمن الإجراءات والبيانات الكمية أو النوعية التي مكّنت الباحث من معالجة المشكلة البحثية.
 - تحديد مجتمع الدراسة وعينتها بشكل دقيق.
 - تحديد الأدوات المستخدمة في الدراسة وتوضيح خصائصها السيكمترية.
 - توضيح نتائج الدراسة بطريقة علمية.
 - مناقشة النتائج مناقشة علمية مبنية على الإطار النظري والدراسات السابقة، بحيث تعكس تفاعل الباحث مع موضوع الدراسة من خلال ما تم التوصل إليه من استنتاجات وتوصيات مستندة إلى تلك النتائج.

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الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين أما بعد
فيسعدني أن أقدم للاصدار السابع عشر من المجلد الرابع لمجلة جامعة الطائف
للعلوم الإنسانية ويأتي هذا العدد جزء مما توليه جامعة الطائف لمجال البحث العلمي من
اهتمام ورعاية كما جاء متوافقا مع رؤية الجامعة الطموحة نحو التميز والإبداع والريادة
وقد حرصنا في هذا العدد على تنوع موضوعاته البحثية والتي توافقت مجالات النشر في
المجلة كما حرصنا على تنوع جهات الباحثين واختلاف تخصصاتهم العلمية فشمّل العدد
(علوم القرآن الكريم والشريعة والأنظمة واللغة العربية والأدب والتربية واللغات الأجنبية)
في بحوث قيمة في مادتها لعدد من الباحثين المتميزين من أعضاء هيئة التدريس في عدد من
جامعات المملكة (جامعة الطائف - الجامعة الإسلامية - جامعة طيبة - جامعة شقراء -
جامعة المجمعة - جامعة الباحة - الجامعة السعودية الالكترونية - جامعة الملك خالد)
وقد خضعت البحوث المقدمة للتحكيم العلمي وفق سياسة المجلة وقوانينها .

ويسعدني أن أتقدم بخالص الشكر والتقدير لمعالي مدير الجامعة الأستاذ
الدكتور / حسام بن عبد الوهاب زمان ، على دعمه واهتمامه البالغ بالمجلة ومتابعته
الحثيثة والشكر بعد لوكيل الجامعة للدراسات العليا والبحث العلمي أ.د. سعد الزهراني على
اهتمامه ودعمه المتواصل .

كما اخص بالشكر زملائي أعضاء هيئة التحرير على مساهمتهم الفاعلة والعلمية في
خدمة المجلة كما أشكر الفريق الإداري بالمجلة على جهودة المبذولة . والشكر موصول للباحثين
على ثقتهم في مجلة جامعة الطائف للعلوم الإنسانية سائلا الله عز وجل أن يبارك في الجهود . .

أعضاء هيئة التحرير

عنهم أ.د. ناصر بن سعود القشامي

رئيس هيئة تحرير

مجلة جامعة الطائف للعلوم الإنسانية

Merits of Eliot's Sweeney Agonistes as a Play

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دكتور / يحيى بن صالح حسن دحامي

أستاذ مشارك
قسم اللغة الانجليزية
كلية العلوم والآداب – المنطق
جامعة الباحة

Abstract

Sweeney Agonistes is an interesting literary poetic work by T. S. Eliot. It has not yet been completely given sufficient examination and analysis. This study endeavors to illustrate the challenges faced by Eliot in dealing with Sweeney Agonistes as a modern dialogue for modern readers. The main goal of this paper is to examine the dialogue of the piece of work under study together with affording a prevue on the basics creating its background.

To many critics, Sweeney Agonistes is perplexing poetic piece of literature to the degree that several critics do not call it a play but a fragment as Eliot himself named it. The first intriguing point which needs to be clarified in connection with Sweeney Agonistes is to prove that this short fragmentary piece is a play. The researcher tries to illustrate to what extent Eliot had the ability to make Sweeney Agonistes a play. The study follows the analytical approach to achieve the goal for drawing inferences. It includes a brief introduction about Eliot's theories on drama and poetry, to be followed by critical-analytical observations on the use of dialogue and characters with special focus on the utility of modern dialogue to back up the argument of the researcher to call it a play.

Key Words: contemporary drama, poetic dialogue, play, Sweeney Agonistes, T. S. Eliot

الملخص :

'سويني أقونستس' Sweeney Agonistes 'تعتبر أحد الأعمال الأدبية الشيقة عند 'تي إس إليوت'، لكنها لم تُعطى الدراسة والتقييم الكامل، الدراسة تحاول أن تُظهر التحدي الذي واجه 'تي إس إليوت' في التعامل مع 'سويني أقونستس' كحوار حديث لجمهور حديث. الهدف الرئيسي لهذه الورقة البحثية هو استنطاق الحوار للعمل الأدبي المناط بالدراسة وأيضاً تقديم عرض للأسس التي بُني عليها إنتاج هذا العمل.

يعتبر 'سويني أقونستس' عمل أدبي شعري لكنه مُحير لكثير من النقاد لدرجة تسميتها 'مقطوعة'، النقطة الاستفهامية التي تحتاج الى توضيح فيما يتعلق بـ 'سويني

أقونستس' هي محاولة إثبات أن هذه المقطوعة يمكن تسميتها مسرحية، بناءً على ذلك فإن الباحث يحاول برهنة إلى أي حد استطاع الشاعر المسرحي 'إليوت' النجاح لجعل 'سويني أقونستس' مسرحية، الدراسة تتبع المنهج التحليلي الناقد كمحاولة لإنجاز الهدف من عملها، الدراسة تحتوي على مقدمة مختصرة عن نظريات 'إليوت' فيما يخص المسرح والشعر ثم تتبع برصد تحليلي ناقد لاستخدام الحوار والشخصيات بتركيز خاص حول استخدام الحوار الحديث كداعم لفكرة تسمية العمل مسرحية. الكلمات المفتاحية: الحوار الشعري، المسرح الحديث، المسرحية، 'تي إس إليوت'، 'سويني أقونستس'

Introduction

Thomas Sterns Eliot (1888 -1965) started his legendary career as a poet, a critic and a dramatist. In later stages of his life, he found himself drawn to the theatre. Eliot chose "to devote the major part of his creative energies in his later years to the theatre" (Smith, Carol H. 1967, p. 3) in which Sweeney Agonistes was a beginning. During his long poetic career commencing with The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, written in 1910 and published five years after, to the Four Quartets (1943), he believes that the platform of the theatre is a central means for making poetry not private but public. That is why; he continued to write poetic drama alongside criticism and poetry.

In his poetry, T. S. Eliot is primarily confronted with the challenge of communication among the modern artists and society. The situation of our artist, Eliot, is chiefly relevant in writing acting-poetry. Acting poetry may be described as active poetry in which action is a necessary element that leads to interaction among characters as well as spectators. The early poetry of Eliot is experimental in the quest for a new standard for dramatic dialogism. As each poet-dramatist identifies his/her own attractive, reliable, and understandable dramatic belief, Eliot believes that the public is interested in a literary work that is profitable and commercial.

Eliot's early concern with 'dramatic poetry' and his fascination with the theatre as a resource to 'mass appeal' climaxed in generating poetic plays. "In the middle decades of the 20th c., dramatic poetry provided a critical code for imagining the work of dramatic writing as instigating new forms of performance,...charted the consequences of using poetry to instigate new performance [such as] staging ... Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* (1932)" (Cushman, et al. 2012, p. 379) and many more. In his quest for a new verse drama convenient to contemporary spectators of the modern period, Eliot wants to create a new form for new theatre, which can be used as a vehicle for developing new watchers.

Eliot, along with some modernist contemporaries, tries to pay no attention to old conventions and traditions, and to create new techniques fit for poetry in order to make the public not so conscious in hearing poetry. At the same time, he wants his dramas to be new in a way that the impact on the addressees would be operative but unconscious. Eliot "believed that any hope for a popular drama would spring from the robust entertainment of the lower class" (Slusser, 1965, p. 6). In order to achieve his ambition, Eliot realizes that poetic drama on the stage might not be different from contemporary language; the language needs to have, on the one hand, a rhythmic speech, which would sound natural and normal speech to both spectators and players alike. On the other hand, it must ensure the power of modern dialogue to express a single character in action which means that the speech of every character is clearly understood by the spectators. These, for him, were mandatories for the dialogues of the stage in which characters have to speak with direct apprehensible lucidity.

Eliot "attempted to develop a poetic drama that would be viable on the modern stage. *Sweeney Agonistes*, his first and most brilliant experiment, was left unfinished in the 1920s and published in 1932" (Perkins, 1976, p. 526). In addition, through *Sweeney Agonistes*, he endeavored to detect by run-through "what forms of versification' are possible on the stage" (Gardner, 1961, p. 24). For reaching his point,

Eliot started to absorb the works of the Greek leaders in addition to those of the great Elizabethan figure such as William Shakespeare. The result shows, in all his plays, the deep-rooted Greek dramas appear to make their influence in Eliot's plays from Sweeney Agonistes to his last play The Elder Statesman. As he was acquainted with the significance of myths in human beliefs, Eliot regularly employed them in his works to which Sweeney Agonistes is no exception. The title itself is indicative of mythology. Then he broadly read, studied and examined numerous Greek plays and got closer to many producers and critics such as E. Martin Browne and Ezra Pound who provided him with a lot of valuable comments and clarifications. In writing Sweeney Agonistes, Eliot went back to Orestes, a Greek story by Aeschylus. He began with 'the fragmentary' play of Sweeney Agonistes in the 1920s wherein he vividly developed the common styles and methods of jazz, minstrel show, and the music hall. This task "was a dramatic experiment" (Schofield, 2000, p. 190) and was looked upon as a basis of Eliot's dramatic profession since it is an experimental work. This new experiment "is a dramatic fragment, half Greek choral, half Jazz riff" (Raine, Craig. 2006. p. 115).

Eliot in his experimentations with dramatic techniques tries to employ themes of common appeal. He wished to make the themes easily distinguished by the public. He prepared himself to employ a kind of free verse of new contemporary form. "There is a definite step forward in Eliot's experiment with the dramatic form in Sweeney Agonistes" (Sarkar, 1957, p. 3); his experiment began with the two fragments, Fragment of a Prologue and Fragment of an Agon, later to be Sweeney Agonistes (1926). During that period, "Eliot had not found the right relationship between theme, subject, and form that was required to compose a complete drama" (Slusser, 1965, p. 1) Then, Eliot proceeded to produce his full-length successful plays from Murder in the Cathedral (1935) to the last one, The Elder Statesman (1958).

Eliot's themes spring from his imaginative, creative and artistic world of spirits. His method of dramatic development follows different

thematic contents starting from Sweeney Agonistes to The Elder Statesman. The themes of Sweeney Agonistes are monotony, anxiety and panic that recline beneath the conventional and the unpleasant. "The banality of civilized life is matched by the animality of the savage one, a Sweeney is only vaguely and light-heartedly hinting at a secret wish to escape the boredom of dull routine which shows itself as a serious yearning in Prufrock" (Manimozhi, M. 2015, p. 27).

The Argument of the Play

Sweeney Agonistes, "an 'Aristophanic fragment' which gives, in syncopated rhythms, a satiric impression of the sterility of proletarian life" (Drabble, 2000, p. 321) is a phenomenon unusual in poetry. The work is divided into two acts and several scenes. There are several characters appearing in the performance of the scenes. The two lower class, Dusty and Doris, encounter Sweeney with one of their acquaintances, and some friends, Klipstein, Krumpacker, and Horsfall. They like to have a nice time; the girls are prepared to give them what they desire. Swarts and Snow, and other characters look as if they were jazz-musicians, imaginably of African origin. They rarely communicate through the play.

To an extent, the characters seem not to be persons but voices that can only perform through dialogue. However, they are existing and they act but not in the traditional sense of the word. The sole illustration of movement is when Dusty and Doris cut the cards or when Dusty have rest by looking through the window. It is ability of Eliot to make role of the characters is talking only; they are in their pseudo-bolted world that does not bear a state of being unsure of doing any significant thing and they are neurotic and disturbed. Generally, "the malaise in the characters of Sweeney Agonistes is hysterical and neurotic" (Donoghue, 1953, p. 65). It is significant to take into account that if cards can forecast future, then future should be inevitable. Dusty and Doris want to discern the future but also they need to avoid future actions all at once. The girls feel fright when they collect the King of

Clubs, 'That's Pereira' but they hesitatingly and instantly change to 'It might be Sweeney'. But when they collect the Coffin, they become softer and relax saying that it does not need to be 'yours, it may mean a friend'.

Well I'm not going to draw any more,
You cut for luck. You cut for luck.
It might break the spell¹

Dusty and Doris want the retentive potency of civilization to have the ability to function:

I don't like life on your crocodile isle (p. 123).

...

That's not life, that's no life
Why I'd just as soon be dead (p. 123).

The two girls are emotionally dead according to Sam's² view of life and at the same time, they dislike spiritual rebirth. That is the cause why Sweeney cannot make himself understood. Sweeney remains in a closed circle. The elementary difficulty with Sweeney is the impossibility of communicating the particular thought of metaphysical transparency that he needs to attain through proposing a shift to the cannibal island. On the isle, he wants 'nothing at all' which might remind him of the 'created beings'. Sweeney is aware of the recurring fruitlessness in a life lived entirely in biological conditions without the opportunity of excellence; just 'Birth, and copulation, and death', so, purity for him, can be reached by hiding away from life of machinelike mechanisms characterized by Doris and Dusty "as to whether such a life, seemingly limited to reproduction and repetition, has significant value" (Kirk, 2006,

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- (1) Eliot, T. S. (1969). The Complete Poems and Plays, London: Faber and Faber, p. 117. [All references about Sweeney Agonistes in this study are from this edition of the book and page numbers are quoted in parenthesis within the text]
- (2) Sam is a short form of Sweeney.

p. 561). Paradoxically, birth, copulation and death can be estimated as the three most important measures in the exhausted lives of the spectators.

The plot of Sweeney Agonistes is simple. The play derives its plot from the story of 'Orestes' of Aeschylus with the theme of purgation. It is significant that more or less the sense of mystery surrounds death in it, showing a scene of the 'murdered girl' in the story. The brilliance which allows Sweeney Agonistes to grow beyond the need for breathing actors is at the same time a kind of death which annuls performers, the body of performers, of whom only the tone remains.

In this dramatic work, Eliot does not manage the method of purgation as he does in The Family Reunion. In Sweeney Agonistes, he focuses on the condition of the sinner, his survival, his state of being not alive or dead in which life for him is as similar as death. The character Sweeney cannot indeed deliver the sense of being not alive, or dead. In Eliot's opinion, the people who cannot look beyond a superficial world may comprehend nothing of what he communicates. It suggests that once the hero has seen reality, he wishes to evade it. It might be achieved either by struggling for nonphysical rebirth or by attempting to underestimate and escape from its commending imperative.

The sense of guilt stimulates new sequences of consciousness in the mind of Sam. The Chorus has a role in the play in which Sweeney gives a kind of illumination:

He didn't know if he was alive
and the girl was dead
He didn't know if the girl was alive
and he was dead
He didn't know if they were both alive
or both were dead (p. 125).

In Sweeney Agonistes, Eliot shifts towards a present-day setting but not in his dramatic ideals. His basic arguments, which largely determine his theories, stay unchanged. Eliot's themes of spiritual

election have been the central argument of the dramatic idealism. The impact of the themes is expected to create an impression of different strategies on the spectators. In going back to the vogue of modern-day characters and events, Eliot's principal target is to combine the gap between the contemporary spectators and the fans of his rhythmical plays. "Sweeney of this experimental drama marks a new development in Eliot's oeuvre" (Daumer, 1989, p. 191). Observing the experimental stage of the prevailing verse drama, one can better comprehend his adaptation of existing environment in Sweeney Agonistes. In such respect, Eliot seems to have been attracted by several reflections and desires to improve the original spontaneities in which the plays of the period might face challenges and uneasy acceptance by some modern spectators. Such reflections are mainly based on his individual experience. Through Sweeney Agonistes Eliot acquires a lot about poetic and dramatic structuring.

Making Sweeney as a poetic character in Eliot's poetry shows obviously his disposition towards poetic drama. It is said that the influence of communicative dialogue is an indispensable dramatic constituent in the poetry of Eliot; and, therefore, several references, residues, and traces of presence are dispersed and strewn throughout his poetry. The rhythmical plays of Eliot are just an extension and improvement of his poetry, so it is of great difficulty to separate or isolate his poetry from his drama. The poet and dramatist are harmoniously integrated together in the distinguished Eliot, the poet-dramatist. Eliot's drama is fundamentally poetic and his poetry is primarily dramatic. It is acknowledged that one finds it difficult to admire Eliot's plays in the same balance as to admire his poetry.

Eliot's drama indicates his weight on religious perception. "He believed in fundamental connection between poetry and drama. The permanent part of a play is the words, and words raised to their highest power produce poetry" (Singh, 2001, p. 208). In carrying out experiments with verse in his dramas, Eliot appears to have been concerned largely in confirming that the zenith of consideration is

the poetic device which is indicated by the syntax, the metre, and the rhetoric ought to be spontaneous.

The employment of dialogue producing musical influence appears recurrently in the play, but the change in the dynamics of the last song that is designated by diminuendo, is likewise symbolic. Additionally, the melodies in the final Chorus and in Agon prosper in allusions to different voices. Critics observe that jazz music is a chief influence on Eliot's efforts in refurbishing the dialogue on the theater. Eliot combined the Greek tradition with jazz music, minstrel show and music hall essentials in order to facilitate the formation of a new vehicle of expression for poetic drama. He lived and produced his literary works in a world in which jazz was the commonest form of entertainment.

Eliot perceived in his essay 'The Social Function of Poetry' that the conversed language is a vehicle of public's tradition. The dialogue is the steward of tradition. Moreover, Eliot argued that the emotional state of the refined persons have little similarity with the unrefined ones. As he appreciated in his essay about dialogue and language, the poet ought to make the dialogue spontaneous, and practice the dialogue with its typical rhythms and forms for preserving contact with the component that is mutual to the sentiments of audiences.

In his essay 'The Music of Poetry', Eliot emphasizes that poetry allow elucidating connection with the mutable dialogue of ordinary speech whether poetry is free or formal, syllabic or accentual, rhymed or unrhymed. Furthermore, he understands that the dependence of verse upon dialogue is unswerving in dramatic poetry more than in any further form of poetry. In an argument on the possibility of poetic drama, Eliot went through a vital study, which is germane to his modern audience using a fit modern entertaining dialogue. The first effort in making such a tentative drama results in his Sweeney Agonistes. Eliot recognized that entertainment through poetic plays was a problem faced by dramatists.

Sweeney Agonistes is a piece of drama which shows a great breach between the necessity and the performance that is apparent, to some range, in Eliot's coming comparatively prosperous poetic dramas. Sweeney Agonistes is a tentative or experimental play which he composed before turning largely to mature dramas in verse such as his five plays *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), *The Family Reunion* (1939), *The Cocktail Party* (1950), *The Confidential Clerk* (1953), and finally *The Elder Statesman* which was composed in (1958). Sweeney Agonistes is "a first model for what its author hoped would become a new kind of contemporary drama based on a new set of dramatic ideals" (Smith, Carol H. 1967, p. 13).

The Waste Land is the last poetic masterwork Eliot composed before shifting to poetic plays in 1922. In his new transferral, Eliot wishes to inscribe plays of present life but in metrical style with certain effects such as drumbeats in them to accentuate and emphasize them. Eliot prepared to publish in *The Criterion* two fragments under the titles of *Fragment of a Prologue* and then *Fragment of an Agon* with a title called *Wanna Go Home, Baby?* The fragments are combined then into a book with a different title, *Sweeney Agonistes*, published in 1932 it also carries the subtitle: *Fragments of an Aristophanic Melodrama*. "Its publication in the form of 'fragments' suggested that a complete dramatic work would be forthcoming, using in new roles characters already familiar to readers of Eliot's poetry" (Smith, Carol H. 1967, p. 32).

Sweeney Agonistes is "a play interspersed with songs" (Gardner, 1961, p. 129) and this theatrical production can be seen via three sides. First, it is connected with the contemporary music-hall comedy, with ragtime songs - the ragtime songs originated from American formula of widespread stage, plain characters, and unemotional mechanical dialogues and communications as well as short pithy sayings expressing a general speech of monotonous and boring dialogue. In this work, we find quite a few technical terms associated with music - *diminuendo*, *bones*, *tambo* - all in spontaneous harmony with the consistency of

the work. By one definition, a play that combines music in drama with comic action is known as a melodrama. Not only that, Sweeney Agonistes is a melodrama also because of the integration of songs.

The characters are divided into two chief sets. Sweeney represents the first set, and all the other characters belong to the second set. Doris and Dusty are two common lower-class flat characters and the matter is the same with Swarts and Snow who approximately do not communicate in the action of the play. Swarts and Snow are two characters related to the traditional minstrel show. At the end, the four characters are assimilated to compose the Chorus. They are effortlessly recognized as flat characters in which Eliot himself, in his essay on Ben Johnson, indicates that characters in a play like Sweeney Agonistes "are flat to fit the world they move in" (Eliot, 1976, p. 159). Though the scenery could call back a shrewd extravaganza sketch, the conversation has certain fact of the swift stylized exchanges of music-hall turn. In Sweeney Agonistes, Eliot employs a splendidly lyrical speech that embodies objective and aspiration.

Secondly, this play is associated with Greek comedy in its combination of theatricality, amusement, harmony, music and exaggeration. The third connotation is correlated to sacred drama, which is improved under the concern and guard of the priests that tried to amalgamate learning and education. In Sweeney Agonistes, Eliot's goal was to grasp a character whose awareness and astuteness might be on the level of the most sensitive audience. He desired to fabricate a verse drama of twofold scenes. "The scenes avoid the conventional meters of verse drama of which he disapproved in favor of jazz rhythms and abstraction" (Smith, 2016, p. 12).

Through deeply examining Sweeney Agonistes, one can see that there is something innovative in the musical qualities of the used dialogue and prominently in the prosody. Dialogue is a broad rule not to reveal something more than required because speakers generally endeavor to achieve economy and diminish superfluity. In music, the idea of superfluity is unknown in that variations are allowed.

If a theme, for instance, was simply removed by a player, music would become muddled and rambling which means that a musician would not distinguish what another one is doing. Similarly, one could say that musicians in composing poetic dramas are speaking different dialogues.

It is neither difficult nor easy to perceive how deliberately Eliot influenced and controlled dialogue shrewdly and deviously to create phonic drama such as the one in Sweeney Agonistes in which sound-reiterations is certainly a conspicuous attribute. Moreover, it is not only sounds that are reiterated but also the phrase "Birth, and copulation, and death" (p. 122), reiterated more than four times. Alongside short, commonly frequent reiterations like greetings, questions, and names illustrate the importance of reiteration. A reiteration is obviously a principal phenomenon in the play. It is significant to apprehend that rhythmic arrangements are upshot of the reiteration of confident basics in the speeches of Sam. A similar kind of reiterated rhythm is apparent in the citation below:

DUSTY How about Pereira?

DORIS What about Pereira?

DUSTY I don't care.

DORIS You don't care!

DUSTY Who pays the rent?

DORIS Yes he pays the rent

DUSTY Well some men don't and some men do (p. 115).

The reiterations form assortment of a negotiation constructed of short question-answer structures approximating the call-answer planning and arrangement of jazz. Structures such as that display exceptional liveliness of dialogue that the rhythm turns out to be an overall leading feature of the drama exactly as jazz music in which drums with double bass offer beat for the musicians. An important feature of jazz is grasped in the accentuation of speech uttered by the performers in the play. Word stress of the characters occasionally remind listeners of the rhythmic designs of jazz; their intonations correspond to the impulsive loud and short accents or peaks they repetitively hear in

jazz music. The accents are put on stressed syllables in speech and on stressed records in jazz music to cause it to be more expressive and dynamic. They make the rhythm pauses on a fragment of a second, and then let it continue as in the following rhythmic lines:

DUSTY I like Sam
Yes and Sam's a nice boy too.
He's a funny fellow
DORIS He is a funny fellow
He's like a fellow once I knew.
He could make you laugh.
DUSTY Sam can make you laugh (pp. 115–116).

Reiteration and variation are key terms in music. Here is another instance in which Doris and Dusty are alternatively gossiping:

There's a lot in the way you pick them up
There's an awful lot in the way you feel
Sometimes they'll tell you nothing at all
You've got to know what you want to ask them
You've got to know what you want to know
It's no use asking them too much
It's no use asking more than once
Sometimes they're no use at all (p. 118).

In the above lines, remarkable high percentage of reiterations can be seen. Reiteration gives consistency, an unparalleled vitality, and dramatic movement in the dialogue.

Eliot in Sweeney Agonistes presents just one character but it is intelligent and dissimilar to other characters in his poetry. Eliot shows the character with the name of Sweeney as it appears in the title. Giving the Sweeney such a state, goes contrary to what Eliot has previously done in several of his poetry in which he makes this character insignificant, vulgar, and unsophisticated. Sweeney is squashed of spiritual energy. Eliot portrays Sweeney in the poem Sweeney among the Nightingales as:

Apeneck Sweeney spreads his knees
Letting his arms hang down to laugh,
The zebra stripes a long his jaw
Swelling to maculate giraffe (p. 56).
And in the poem Sweeney Erect Sweeney is depicted as:
This withered root of knots of hair
Slitted below and gashed with eyes,
This oval O cropped out with teeth:
The sickle motion from the thighs (p. 42)

Sweeney is the exceptional individual in the play who is considered complete in the play. The character "presented in the play is no more [than] just a fleeting reference or a passive description or a representative image of modern man but someone who has been given a chance to be articulate, to communicate his ideas, to share his insights, in other words he is an active participator" (Tiwari, 2007, p. 41). He is fundamentally different as the above lines show from Eliot's early Sweeney in the poems Sweeney Erect and Sweeney among the Nightingales, but similar to the imagined Sweeney seen in *The Waste Land*. Sweeney knows something the others do not, he has something to say; his tragedy ascends from not being capable to deliver his subject. "He is the ordinary sensual man" (Childs, 2013, p. 79). His complaint that he "gotta use words" (p. 125) shows that he is one who is foreshadowing his genius. The loss of Sweeney to converse his thoughts increases the importance of his knowledge. Moreover, Eliot's failure to complete the play does not diminish his attainments.

In the leading act 'Fragment of a Prologue', a depiction of the Jazz age is revealed where one can find insignificances and trivialities of the gloomy round of trivial existence exactly like the trivialities Eliot has shown in *The Waste Land*. In this act, the whole obligation and accountability of both man and woman in Eliot's portrayal of life is that the people here are preoccupied only by speaking via telephones. They pretend to prepare for a gathering with visitors or going away

for meeting them. Eliot underscores the spiritual hollowness and vacantness of the life of people by dwelling upon their flourishing and affluent pastimes. People are shown spending and passing time playing cards and recalling the affluences of their past time.

The second act 'Fragment of an Agon', displays a sombre note. The character of morality, Agon is categorized as the divergence between the values and principles of death and life, well and bad, and even between seasons such as winter and summer. Sweeney's outstanding advent is affirmed through dynamic cadence and a productive dialogue full of images. In the second act, Sweeney is portrayed as a joyful man hoping to stay away from tedium and fatigue of boring life. The fierce existence is compared with the triviality of sophisticated life as that of *The Waste Land*. Sweeney occupies a chief place and he is unlike his namesake in the other poems for the reason that he expresses profounder realities and refers to the spiritual emptiness of the stylish, shallow society surrounding him.

The fundamental literary model of the play is the history of sin and expiation. There is a link between sin and expiation which is the penitent. Sweeney Agonistes is exemplified by the man who "did a girl in" (p. 124), and has to reach purgation after committing the sin that may lead him to either spiritual rebirth or social. Birth-death-rebirth is the circle that penitent runs through.

I've been born and once is enough.
You don't remember, but I remember,
Once is enough (p. 122).

This suggests that Sweeney is a moral character, who does not wish to be born once more. He is the one who has found morality.

Two epigraphs through which we find that they possibly serve as indicators to the clandestine life of Sweeney's personality. His words might be related to the epigraphs. The first is correlated to the attitude of the matricide, Orestes. The Furies chase him because of his sin. He can see them but they are invisible to others. Orestes, the murderer,

is a creature born of sin and remorse, and then he is separated from the rest of the humankind. The reference of Sweeney to the act of murder of a girl by the lover and the feeling of seclusion and shock has obvious connections with the Greek Orestes to make the first epigraph. In addition, in the second epigraph there is a religious mystic reliance which refers to methods of discipline. Sweeney is deprived of everything contains earthly desires, ties, or relations.

These two previous epigraphs promote the sacred position of Sweeney Agonistes. They also offer sustenance to the opinion that the hero is fully unlike Apeneck Sweeney that Eliot applied in the verse. The audiences/readers confront two interrogations concerning the speeches of Sweeney; the first interrogation is whether they are appropriate; the second is whether they bear dramatic possibility or importance. The first issue is not easy to answer because the play excludes indication about Sweeney's character and temperament. Sweeney's wisdom is not a result of his private self-experience but he is obviously an agent of Eliot himself. Eliot employed a kind of speech in which Sweeney speaks spiritual realities much different from other characters; however, we find the total quality of Sweeney's speech shows that he does not have credentials to sustain a greater status that Eliot prearranged to give to him.

The wisdom in Sweeney is not a consequence of his innate experience except for the fact that he is a mediation of interaction between the dramatist and the spectators. Helen Gardner remarks that Sweeney Agonistes is not a complete play but it encompasses more or less characteristics of a play. Sweeney longs for getting away from the wearisome routine in life to a new one where he finds only palm trees, fruit to eat, only the surf of the sea to overhear and only the sea to see. He sings:

Well that's life on a crocodile isle.
There's no telephones
There's no gramophones

There's no motor cars
No two-seaters, no six-seaters,
No Citroen, no Rolls-Royce,
Nothing to eat but the fruit as it grows.
Nothing to eat but the fruit as it grows.
Nothing to see but the palmtrees one way
And the sea the other way.
Nothing to hear but the sound of the surf. (p. 121)

Eliot in *Sweeney Agonistes* attempts to unmask arrangements of dialogue that are apposite on the stage. He seeks to expose a modern stature of verse that might be an attractive technique for present-day listeners in place of blank verse as it was for the Elizabethans. Eliot tries rendering rhythms of speech by reaching to some degree which could be named poetry. He continued to challenge the difficulty of how ideas can be articulated, as one would expect.

If rhythm is revealed in the most ordinary dialogue, according to Eliot, rhythm should be effective and enriching to an extent, which might express the utmost feelings without losing its impulse and spontaneity. So, he changes dialogue into rhythmic sound with special effects:

But that's nothing to me and nothing to you.
Full Chorus: Wauchope, Horsfall, Klipstein, Krumpacker
When you're alone in the middle of the night (p. 125)

For that, *Sweeney Agonistes* is significant as a tentative play in the new ordinary dialogue that can be easily recognized also as dramatic verse. The play is the first effort to announce Eliot's rhythmic and theatrical style that, with the advantage of some acting aids, can be performed positively on the stage. The performance is advantageous because of the jazz accompaniment, which is an important aid to help making the play positive. Not only that, but also some of the dialogues and terminologies have parallels with the major styles of liturgical forms that Eliot realized and acquired from different anthropologists

of the day. Sweeney Agonistes is, in some ways, significant in that the theatrical invention is associated with and accompanied by great poems along with plays that he produces before and after this work.

The significance of Sweeney Agonistes lies in being a tentative style and in composing verse out of a dialogue that is really enunciated by people of contemporary society. Such dialogic verse is characterized by paltriness, superficiality, triviality, and mechanicality such as jazz music, cars, telephones, trivial unimportant social formalities and traditional conventions, all are important. Sweeney, as a sophisticated character, faces a conversational problem because of his erudite realization with others around him.

Several professional evaluators/critics contend that Sweeney Agonistes is merely fragmentary and an unfinished verse drama. Eliot "began to think in terms of a practitioner. He had tried his hand at verse drama with Sweeney Agonistes in the 1920s, post-Waste Land period but had become tangled up in generic and thematic issues that he could not resolve" (Cooper, 2006, p. 16). The work hardly surpassed the difficulty of determining an appropriate dramatic communication. This piece of work, Sweeney Agonistes, symbolizes contrary limits of the talent and faculty for Eliot. He would weld different extremes together in the later plays he composed. In this play, the reader evidently considers the acute perception of the condition of humankind being disadvantaged of spiritual implication. The play is a literary piece that has not reached the achievement of successful plays because it lacks, to a good extent, seemly dramatic speech. Conversely, insofar as Eliot is concerned, it is with this fragmented play that a cornerstone for his next poetic dramas was laid.

The lines in Sweeney Agonistes remind one of the reiterations and little broken rhythms as thudding rhymes. They are dropped to approach further nearness to Eliot's normal swapping of poetic and dramatic speech. Eliot "usually produced a doubleness of action, whether by symbolic allusion or by an accidental and unconscious sub-structure" (Slusser, 1965, p. 4). The whole structure of Sweeney

Agonistes is in broad conventionality with Eliot's theory on dramatic echelons. Eliot attempts to draw attention to emotional responses of heterogeneous hearers/spectators by presenting characters that possess numerous levels of alertness and awareness.

If one agrees to the assumption that Sweeney *Agonistes* is a play, and if one realizes that there are no physical actions, real performers, or candid setting, one may ask: What persists at that time? Definitely, the convincing response will be: dialogue. It is the dialogue which conveys and symbolizes the action, makes the characters and illustrates the setting. From our discussion up to this point, it can justly be concluded that in Sweeney *Agonistes*, the principal emphasis is on dialogue.

In conventional drama, action, character, and dialogue are typically of the same importance, although some inequalities might appear. Eliot merged the entire drama into its own dialogue, thus divulging what dialogue alone is capable of. He extended the musical aptitude that is only affiliated with dialogue itself, and is not reliant on any further dramatic constituent. Thus, Eliot furnished dialogue with a new, noticeable, distinct form of reality, and made it a means of thorough dramatic expression. This is the reason why one can talk about the revival of dramatic dialogue in the two-act Sweeney *Agonistes*.

The play remains detached from almost all plays of Eliot by a break, not of time but of spirit. The imagery of Sweeney *Agonistes* focuses essentially on a sterile civilization. The play, by virtue of its emblematic environment, belongs to the realm of *The Waste Land*. It is right that Eliot makes the hero, Sam, to pursue deeply a factual spiritual realization or significance in life. However, Sam cannot do his aim through 'the process of choice' that the central characters in the other plays accomplish. It is noteworthy that the character Sweeney does not belong to the same world of Eliot's plays, but that he belongs to the world of *The Waste Land*. His quandary being different is because of the masterfulness of Eliot to make Sweeney bound to be different but not fully in that he still bears close affinity with other heroes like Harry of *The Family Reunion*, Celia of *The Cocktail Party*, and Colby

of The Confidential Clerk. Irrespective of that the solutions that these characters arrive at, are considerably unlike each other, they all are at the same level of spiritual consciousness. It is Eliot's virtuosity to report special characters of divergent degrees of awareness.

The interactions between actors do not change. Moreover, even if one considers that Sweeney Agonistes is a fragment, it is obvious that there is an absence of concrete action in it just as what one finds largely in The Family Reunion. Nevertheless, not to exclude it fully, there are, to a degree, abstract actions; we know that there is the window as a reference to action. Not only that but also we observe that there is the house that is indicated by "KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK" (p. 118). Furthermore, there is a sign of the street. Sweeney says "Wait till I put the car round the corner" (p. 118).

Conclusion

Although Sweeney Agonistes appears in Eliot's anthology among the unfinished poems, it is claimed that it is undeniably a poetic play as it fulfils the basic requirements of drama. To sum up, Sweeney Agonistes is an outstanding landmark in Eliot's steady progress towards unsullied dramatic talent. Having in mind Eliot's theories and practice, it shows a fine instance of his dramatic theories woven into his writings. It seems as if the playwright had broken fresh ground about this poetic play. It is clear that Sweeney Agonistes is a play full of musical features, rhythm, and onomatopoeia. It is considered to have been performed as a significant stimulant in the progress of dramatic dialogue. It is the dialogue that represents the action, makes the characters and illustrates the setting.

The play brings firsthand colors to the dialogue of modern theatre. Aside from several other things, this poetic drama possesses some potential dramatic elements: first, it has a chorus; secondly, its setting is ceremonial; and finally this poetic drama comes closer to the rhythms of modern speech. Eliot, in Sweeney Agonistes, obviously succeeds in finding a new vehicle for dramatic dialogue.

The principal focus in Sweeney Agonistes is on dialogue itself, on exploiting its musical aptitudes, and on playing with its rhythm, while heavily depending on the opportunities of jazz, which helped abolish conventions and dramatic and poetic forms, the only convention that the chances might not ignore is dialogue itself. Eliot, in his pursuit of new modern ways, offered the foremost role to dialogue. The dramatic dialogue is still there in the play and Sweeney Agonistes is an antecedent to modern drama.

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